

Shields Valley Elementary
Computers Helping Individual Learners Develop
(CHILD)

Partners: White Sulphur Springs Public Schools, Harlowton High School, Townsend Public Schools, Montana State University, and the University of Montana-Helena

Abstract

This application proposed to establish the CHILD (Computers Helping Individual Learners Develop) consortium. This project will replicate the TALES model of professional development in four Montana school districts and beyond. Shields Valley Elementary is the prime applicant and will be the fiscal agent. Shields Valley Elementary is a high need district, as are Harlowton High School and White Sulphur Springs Elementary and High School. Townsend Public Schools has been approved as the high technology proficient school.

MT TALES was a great start....TALES set about to teach technology skills to teachers, to change the way teachers taught, to infuse technology into the curriculum and to improve student achievement. The goals were ambitious and certainly TALES made an impact on teachers and students. Teams worked collaboratively on specific projects. An On-Site-Coordinator (OSC) was available for training and support. Established weekly training times and stipends for team members were critical. Funding for the hardware and software for the teachers was necessary as well. Refining the most successful components of TALES has brought about the CHILD model—Computers Helping Individual Learners Develop.

Elements of TALES worked well because it was developed in sound research. In order to bolster the TALES model, the development team has looked at documents from ISTE, the ACOT project, NCREL and NWREL, Intel Teach to the Future and brain research. **1-**CHILD will strengthen professional development by including TALES trained Integration Specialist for the Regional Training Network to provide on-going, on-site support to OSC's and teams as well as spear-head outreach and development activities. **2-**The CHILD model puts steps and strategies to TALES technology infusion goal by providing another year of stipended team membership and Teach to the Future integration training from our partner Intel as well as training in the Understanding by Design curriculum framework. **3-**CHILD has extended the outreach and partnership goals of TALES by already securing the full support of the University of Montana at Helena for a Service Learning project that will provide re-furbished computers for mini-labs and for identified homes in need. **4-**Also, as a partner, UMH is currently developing an online cohort course to train high school students in CHILD districts to serve as support personnel. **5-**To ensure that CHILD truly brings about an improvement in student academic achievement, the Education Department of MSU-Bozeman has already begun to develop tools for CHILD teachers to use in assessing teaching strategies and the impact of technology on achievement. **6-**MSU faculty members are actively engaged in developing assessment tools to gather baseline data before training ever begins. **7-**It was clear that the newly developed TALES website was valuable so to replicate and further the vision, the CHILD website at www.mtchild.org has been established to be a focal point for the CHILD Regional Training Network much like www.learningspace.org is for Washington and state educators.

The CHILD development team considered the key elements of the highly successful TALES model, the identified goals on the 5-yr plans of the schools currently involved, district technology plans and research relevant to develop the extremely promising, multi-faceted CHILD project.

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 Shields Valley Elementary